FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

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Related resources:: Philadelphia Experiment

DEPARTMENT OF THE NAVY
OFFICE OF NAVAL RESEARCH
ARLINGTON, VIRGINIA 22217

Information Sheet: Philadelphia Experiment

Over the years, the Navy has received innumerable queries about the so-called "Philadelphia Experiment" or "Project" and the alleged role of the Office of Naval Research (ONR) in it. The majority of these inquiries are directed to the Office of Naval Research or to the Fourth Naval District in Philadelphia. The frequency of these queries predictably intensifies each time the experiment is mentioned by the popular press, often in a science fiction book.

The genesis of the Philadelphia Experiment myth dates back to 1955 with the publication of *The Case for UFO's* by the late Morris K. Jessup.

Some time after the publication of the book, Jessup received correspondence from a Carlos Miquel Allende, who gave his address as R.D. #1, Box 223, New Kensington, Pa. In his correspondence, Allende commented on Jessup's book and gave details of an alleged secret naval experiment conducted by the Navy in Philadelphia in 1943. During the experiment, according to Allende, a ship was rendered invisible and teleported to and from Norfolk in a few minutes, with some terrible after-effects for crew members. Supposedly, this incredible feat was accomplished by applying Einstein's "unified field" theory. Allende claimed that he had witnessed the experiment from another ship and that the incident was reported in a Philadelphia newspaper. The identity of the newspaper has never been established. Similarly, the identity of Allende is unknown, and no information exists on his present address.

In 1956 a copy of Jessup's book was mailed anonymously to ONR. The pages of the book were interspersed with hand-written comments which alleged a knowledge of UFO's, their means of motion, the culture and ethos of the beings occupying these UFO's, described in pseudo-scientific and incoherent terms.

Two officers, then assigned to ONR, took a personal interest in the book and showed it to Jessup. Jessup concluded that the writer of those comments on his book was the same person who had written him about the Philadelphia Experiment. These two officers personally had the book retyped and arranged for the reprint, in typewritten form, of 25 copies. The officers and their personal belongings have left ONR many years ago, and ONR does not have a file copy of the annotated book.

Personnel at the Fourth Naval District believe that the questions surrounding the so-called "Philadelphia Experiment" arise from quite routine research which occurred during World War II at the Philadelphia Naval Shipyard. Until recently, it was believed that the foundation for the apocryphal stories arose from degaussing experiments which have the effect of making a ship undetectable or "invisible" to magnetic mines. Another likely genesis of the bizarre stories about levitation, teleportation and effects on human crew members might be attributed to experiments with the generating plant of a destroyer, the *USS Timmerman*. In the 1950's this ship was part of an experiment to test the effects of a small, high-frequency generator providing l,000 hz instead of the standard 400hz. The higher frequency generator produced corona discharges, and other well known phenomena associated with high frequency generators. None of the crew suffered effects from the experiment.

ONR has never conducted any investigations on invisibility, either in 1943 or at any other time (ONR was established in 1946.) In view of present scientific knowledge, ONR scientists do not believe that such an experiment could

be possible except in the realm of science fiction.

08 September 1996

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The "Philadelphia Experiment"

Related resources::

Office of Naval Research (ONR) fact sheet
UFO Research Guide
Photograph of USS *Eldridge*

Allegedly, in the fall of 1943 a U.S. Navy destroyer was made invisible and teleported from Philadelphia, Pennsylvania, to Norfolk, Virginia, in an incident known as the Philadelphia Experiment. Records in the Operational Archives Branch of the Naval Historical Center have been repeatedly searched, but no documents have been located which confirm the event, or any interest by the Navy in attempting such an achievement.

The ship involved in the experiment was supposedly the *USS Eldridge*. Operational Archives has reviewed the deck log and war diary from *Eldridge's* commissioning on 27 August 1943 at the New York Navy Yard through December 1943. The following description of *Eldridge's* activities are summarized from the ship's war diary. After commissioning, *Eldridge* remained in New York and in the Long Island Sound until 16 September when it sailed to Bermuda. From 18 September, the ship was in the vicinity of Bermuda undergoing training and sea trials until 15 October when *Eldridge* left in a convoy for New York where the convoy entered on 18 October. *Eldridge* remained in New York harbor until 1 November when it was part of the escort for Convoy UGS-23 (New York Section). On 2 November the convoy entered Naval Operating Base, Norfolk. On 3 November, *Eldridge* and Convoy UGS-23 left for Casablanca where it arrived on 22 November. On 29 November, *Eldridge* left as one of escorts for Convoy GUS-22 and arrived with the convoy on 17 December at New York harbor. *Eldridge* remained in New York on availability training and in Block Island Sound until 31 December when it steamed to Norfolk with four other ships. During this time frame, *Eldridge* was never in Philadelphia.

Eldridge's complete World War II action report and war diary coverage, including the remarks section of the 1943 deck log, is available on microfilm, NRS-1978-26. The cost of a duplicate film is indicated on the fee schedule. To order a duplicate film, please complete the duplication order form and send a check or money order for the correct amount as indicated on the NHC fee schedule, made payable to the Department of the Navy, to the Operational Archives, at the above address.

Supposedly, the crew of the civilian merchant ship *SS Andrew Furuseth* observed the arrival via teleportation of the *Eldridge* into the Norfolk area. *Andrew Furuseth's* movement report cards are in the Tenth Fleet records in the custody of the Modern Military Branch, National Archives and Records Admnistration, (8601 Adelphi Road, College Park, MD 20740-6001), which also has custody of the action reports, war diaries and deck logs of all World War II Navy ships, including *Eldridge*. The movement report cards list the merchant ship's ports of call, the dates of the visit, and convoy designation, if any. The movement report card shows that *Andrew Furuseth* left Norfolk with Convoy UGS-15 on 16 August 1943 and arrived at Casablanca on 2 September. The ship left Casablanca on 19 September and arrived off Cape Henry on 4 October. *Andrew Furuseth* left Norfolk with Convoy UGS-22 on 25 October and arrived at Oran on 12 November. The ship remained in the Mediterranean until it returned with Convoy GUS-25 to Hampton Roads on 17 January 1944. The Archives has a letter from Lieutenant Junior Grade William S. Dodge, USNR, (Ret.), the Master of *Andrew Furuseth* in 1943, categorically denying that he or his crew observed any unusual event while in Norfolk. *Eldridge* and *Andrew Furuseth* were not even in Norfolk at the same time.

The Office of Naval Research (ONR) has stated that the use of force fields to make a ship and her crew invisible does not conform to known physical laws. ONR also claims that Dr. Albert Einstein's Unified Field Theory was never completed. During 1943-1944, Einstein was a part-time consultant with the Navy's Bureau of Ordnance, undertaking theoretical research on explosives and explosions. There is no indication that Einstein was involved in research relevant to invisibility or to teleportation. ONR's information sheet on the Philadelphia Experiment is attached.

The Philadelphia Experiment has also been called "Project Rainbow." A comprehensive search of the Archives has

failed to identify records of a Project Rainbow relating to teleportation or making a ship disappear. In the 1940s, the code name RAINBOW was used to refer to the Rome-Berlin-Tokyo Axis. The RAINBOW plans were the war plans to defeat Italy, Germany and Japan. RAINBOW V, the plan in effect on 7 December 1941 when Japan attacked Pearl Harbor, was the plan the U.S. used to fight the Axis powers.

Some researchers have erroneously concluded that degaussing has a connection with making an object invisible. Degaussing is a process in which a system of electrical cables are installed around the circumference of ship's hull, running from bow to stern on both sides. A measured electrical current is passed through these cables to cancel out the ship's magnetic field. Degaussing equipment was installed in the hull of Navy ships and could be turned on whenever the ship was in waters that might contain magnetic mines, usually shallow waters in combat areas. It could be said that degaussing, correctly done, makes a ship "invisible" to the sensors of magnetic mines, but the ship remains visible to the human eye, radar, and underwater listening devices.

After many years of searching, the staff of the Operational Archives and independent researchers have not located any official documents that support the assertion that an invisibility or teleportation experiment involving a Navy ship occurred at Philadelphia or any other location.

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